

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:

1. An electronic certification method for delegating actions of a titleholder having an electronic certificate stored in a titleholder terminal to a delegate having a first electronic certificate stored in a delegate terminal, said certificate of said titleholder and said first certificate of said delegate further including respective public keys and certificate signatures of respective certification authorities, said method comprising the following steps after solicitation of delegation to said delegate by said titleholder:

- in said delegate terminal, drawing up a recertification request and transmitting said recertification request to said titleholder terminal,

- in said titleholder terminal, drawing up a second electronic delegate certificate in response to said recertification request and transmitting said second certificate to said delegate terminal, said second certificate including data such as said public key of said titleholder, said public key of said delegate and a delegation attribute, and a signature of said data with a private key of said titleholder, and

- in said delegate terminal, validating said signature in said second delegate certificate transmitted in order for said delegate terminal to use said second certificate for any action delegated by said titleholder to said delegate.

2. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein said data in said second delegate certificate includes a delegation duration.

3. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein said data in said second delegate certificate includes information relating to revocation of said second certificate.

4. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein said titleholder certificate is included in said data of said second delegate certificate.

5. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein an attribute representing authorization of said titleholder to delegate is included in said titleholder certificate.

6. The method claimed in claim 1, including determination of a signature of said public key of said delegate in said delegate terminal as a function of a private key of said delegate, said delegate public key and said signature being introduced into said recertification request, and validation of said signature extracted from the received recertification request as a function of said delegate public key by said titleholder terminal, before drawing up said second delegate certificate.

7. The method claimed in claim 1, including generation of second delegate public and private keys in said delegate terminal, said second public key being included in said recertification request and then introduced into said delegate second certificate by said titleholder terminal in place of said respective public key of said delegate.

8. The method claimed in claim 1, including generation of said private key of said titleholder in said titleholder terminal, in place of drawing up and transmitting said recertification request, in order to establish said signature of said data by means of said private key and transmit said private key of said titleholder substantially in parallel with said electronic second delegate certificate to said delegate terminal.

9. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein said second delegate certificate is stored on a storage medium removable from said delegate terminal.